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# Farm Broadcasters Letter

United States Department of Agriculture Office of Public Affairs Radio-TV Division Washington, D. C. 20250 (202) 720-4330

Letter No. 2573

August 28, 1992



*Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan meets with USDA radio staff members following the Aug. 26 audiobridge conference with farm broadcasters. L-R Doug Wakefield, Brenda Curtis, Gary Crawford, Secretary Madigan, and Maria Bynum. (USDA photo by Byron Schumaker.)*

**SCHOOL MENU NUTRITION RESEARCH** -- Results are due next spring from the first major school nutrition research in a decade. The project involves 600 schools and 4,000 students. The study is looking at meals planned, served and actually eaten during a 24-hour period. Secretary Edward Madigan says the results "...will tell us how nutritious school lunches are and allow us to analyze school lunch data with an eye to revising the current meal pattern to help bring it in line with the Dietary Guidelines." USDA has also helped schools provide healthier meals by lowering the fat, salt and sugar in over 80 commodities. **Contact: Roger Runningen (202) 720-4623.**

**IMPROVING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION** -- Ground has been broken for a multi-million dollar research facility in Georgia to develop environmentally and economically sound agricultural systems. Researchers at the National Environmentally Sound Production Agriculture Laboratory at the University of Georgia's Coastal Plain Experiment Station will study ways to reduce the use of pesticides that can threaten environmental quality or food safety. The researchers will also examine practices to improve ground-and-surface water quality, recycling animal wastes and methods to increase farm diversity. **Contact: Anne Rice (912) 386-3348.**

**RURAL DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATION** -- Mary Ann Baron has been appointed the first administrator of the new Rural Development Administration. The appointment is effective Sept. 6. Since 1987 Baron has served as the Kentucky state director for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farmers Home Administration. Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan says, "We are very fortunate to have someone with her administrative ability and background to serve as RDA's first administrator." RDA was previously administered by USDA's Farmers Home Administration. **Contact: Roger Runningen (202) 720-4623.**

**A NATURAL INSECTICIDE** -- An alternative to synthetic insecticides that are used by growers of ornamentals and other non-food plants may soon be available to home gardeners and producers. The insecticide comes from the neem tree. Tests by USDA's Agricultural Research Service show that the extract from neem seeds controls over 80 major insect pests by disrupting changes in the insect larva, causing death during molting. The extract is nontoxic to humans and animal life, and won't harm honey bees. Registration of the insecticide is underway for use on food crops. **Contact: Jim Locke (301) 504-6413.**

**AGRICULTURE OUTLOOK '93** -- The annual outlook conference will be held at USDA headquarters in Washington, D.C., December 1-3, 1992. The conference provides valuable agricultural forecasts for the year ahead. Those who have previously registered will be receiving information soon by mail. Registration information is available by calling (202) 720-3050 or FAX (202) 690-1805. **Contact: Ray Bridge (202) 720-5447.**

**13th ANNUAL FAMILY FARM REPORT TO CONGRESS** -- The trend toward fewer but larger farms slowed during the 1970s and 1980s, and the agricultural sector displayed business returns and household income comparable with nonfarm sectors. These observations are contained in a new 25-page publication issued by USDA's Economic Research Service: "Structural Change in the U.S. Farm Sector, 1974-87: The 13th Annual Family Farm Report To Congress," by Donn Reimund and Fred Gale. **Contact: Donn Reimund (202) 219-0522.**

**SEED STORAGE LAB EXPANDED** -- Storage capacity at the National Seed Storage Laboratory, in Fort Collins, CO, has been enlarged to preserve four times as many seed samples. The samples are used to combat future crop diseases and losses to insects. More than 232,000 seed and plant genetic material samples are currently preserved. Plant breeders from all over the world draw on the samples to improve crops. Last year more than 190,000 seed samples were distributed to plant breeders in 80 countries. **Contact: Steve Eberhart (303) 495-3200.**

**U.S. FARM EXPORTS TO EAST ASIA** -- Four East Asian nations are forecast to take 31 percent of total U.S. farm exports in 1992. Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong lead the list of nations in East Asia that are major consumers of United States agricultural exports. Economic growth throughout the Pacific Rim region is expected to rebound next year from its slump, but the phenomenal rates posted in the last decade are not likely to return. U.S. farm exports to East Asia are forecast to expand about 4 percent to \$12 billion. **Contact: Terri Raney (202) 219-0610.**

**FARM INCOME** -- U.S. farmers will reap a projected \$51-\$58 billion in net cash income (the cash available to a farm operation after all cash expenses have been paid) this year. Deficiency and diversion payments are forecast to drop 10 percent this year. "However, higher conservation and disaster payments will lead to an overall increase in government payments and boost cash income," explains economist Robert Dubman of USDA's Economic Research Service. Production expenses are forecast to climb 2 percent this year. Labor will likely account for the biggest increase, up 7 percent, or about \$1 billion, from last year. **Contact: Robert Dubman (202) 219-0807.**

R-TV Fax: (202) 690-2165  
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(Call from FAX machine)



## FROM OUR RADIO SERVICE

**AGRICULTURE USA # 1838** -- Individuals who use a wheel chair, walk with a cane or guide dog, or use sign language to communicate may have had some difficulty during their visit to a recreational site. The U.S. Forest Service is taking steps to have facilities in our National Forests more accessible to people with disabilities. Doug Wakefield covers these efforts in this edition. (Weekly reel -- 13-1/2 minute documentary.)

**CONSUMER TIME # 1320** -- The fearless flea fighters; safe school lunches; the cheese detectives; business retention and expansion; preserving agricultural literature. (Weekly reel of 2-1/2 to 3 minute consumer features.)

**AGRITAPE NEWS & FEATURES #1829** -- USDA News Highlights; giving a little pesticide a big punch; low-tech fish farming; biodiesel; producing leaner hogs faster. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

**NEWS FEATURE FIVE #1535** -- Nematode control; amber secrets; chicken imaging; better cow's milk; chromium and insulin. (Weekly reel of research feature stories.)

**UPCOMING ON USDA RADIO NEWSLINE** -- Tue., Sept. 8, Western Europe ag outlook; Wed., Sept. 9, crop-weather update; Thur., Sept. 10, U.S. crop production; world ag supply and demand; Fri. Sept. 11, farm labor; world grain situation; world cotton situation; world oilseed situation. **(These are the USDA reports we know about in advance. Our Newsline carries many stories every day which are not listed in this lineup. Please don't let the lack of a story listing keep you from calling.)**

**DIAL THE USDA RADIO NEWSLINE (202) 488-8358 or 8359.**

Material changed at 5 p.m., EDT, each working day.

## FROM OUR TELEVISION NEWS SERVICE

**FEATURES** -- **Lynn Wyvill** reports on back to school food safety; **Will Pemble** reports on a new healthy beverage developed by USDA research; **Patrick O'Leary** reports on USDA's research apprentice program for high school seniors.

**ACTUALITIES** -- Secretary of Agriculture **Edward Madigan** talks to farm broadcasters in a USDA radio news conference; USDA chief meteorologist **Norton Strommen** updates U.S. crop and weather conditions, including effects on agricultural areas of tropical storm Andrew.

**UPCOMING FEATURES** -- **Patrick O'Leary** reports on USDA's fall color hotline; **Lynn Wyvill** reports on the experimental crop, Annual Medics; and **DeBoria Janifer** reports on changes in the U.S. aquaculture industry.

**EVERY OTHER WEEK** -- **Agriculture Update**, five minutes of USDA farm program information in "news desk" format with B-roll.

*Available on Satellite Galaxy 6, channel 23, audio 6.2 or 6.8, downlink frequency 4160 MHz.: Thursdays from 7:30 - 7:45 p.m., EDT, Saturdays from 10 - 10:30 a.m., EDT, and Mondays from 8 - 8:30 a.m., EDT.*

## OFFMIKE

**PUTTING WOLVES IN YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK...**is a hot topic for listeners served by **Taylor Brown** (Northern Ag Network, Billings, MT). Ranchers regard the introduction of the predator as a threat to their animals. An environmental impact statement is being prepared, but Taylor says completion is at least two-years away.

**MAKES YOU FEEL GOOD ALL OVER...**is the way **Ray Forcier** (KWKH, Shreveport, LA) termed the four consecutive days of record low temperatures. Ray says the temperature of 54 degrees on August 17 was 12 degrees colder than the previous low. Ray is looking forward to live coverage of the Louisiana rodeo finals at the state fair, Oct. 23 to Nov. 1, in Shreveport.

**GOVERNOR'S CHARITY STEER SHOW...**at the Iowa State Fair, August 22, was co-hosted by **Doug Cooper** (Iowa State Ag. Ext. Ser., Ames) and **Kim Dlouhy** (WOW, Omaha, NE). Kim interviewed **Secretary Edward Madigan**, who was visiting the Omaha area, on the possibility of disaster assistance for farmers in her region who lost crops due to adverse weather.

### *Farm Broadcasters Letter*



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**IT WAS HARD TO FIND...**ripe tomatoes in the horticultural displays at county fairs this year, says **Susan Risinger** (WJAG/KEXL, Norfolk, NE). Susan says crop development is two weeks behind schedule. Congratulations to Susan. She won the Profitable Agriculture Conservation Technology award for her series of programs at the recent National Ridgetill Conference in Sioux City, Iowa. The award is sponsored by the Conservation Technology Information Center.

**NEW PHONE NUMBER...**of the Berns Bureau is (202) 628-1430, says **Matt Kaye** (Berns Bureau, Washington, D.C.). FAX number is (202) 628-1432. The bureau recently moved to new offices on Capitol Hill.

**CONGRATULATIONS...**to **Thom Wilborn** (Associated Press Broadcast Services, Washington, D.C.) for the honorable mention he received in the Best Writing category of the AP National Awards for the broadcast news center. Thom covers the agriculture beat for AP.

*Vic Powell*

VIC POWELL

Chief, Radio and TV Division